CLAIMS

1. A server apparatus in a presence display system comprising the server apparatus and a client apparatus for each user, constituted to allow the client apparatus to display the states of other users, comprising:

means for holding information indicating the states of each user and location information that are transmitted by each of the client apparatuses;

means for storing a buddy list that registers other users whose states the user wishes to watch, for each user; and

means for transmitting, to each user, information indicating the states of other users registered in the buddy list and information relating to the distance between the user and the other users.

2. The server apparatus in a presence display system according to claim 1, wherein

the location information includes latitude and longitude information, and the apparatus further comprises:

means for calculating the distance between the user and the other users registered in the buddy list on the basis of the latitude and longitude information transmitted by each user, and determining the proximity of the other users by comparing the calculated distance with a predetermined threshold value, and wherein

the proximity thus determined is transmitted to the client apparatus as information relating to the distance between the user and the other users.

3. The server apparatus in a presence display system according to claim 2, wherein the threshold value can be optionally set by each user.

4. The server apparatus in a presence display system according to claim 2, wherein the location information further

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includes address information, and address information is transmitted to the client apparatus in addition to the proximity.

5. The server apparatus in a presence display system according to claim 1, wherein

means for storing information indicating whether a user gives consent for information relating to the distance thereof to be transmitted to the other users is provided for each user, and

the information relating to the distance is not transmitted to the client apparatus of users that have not consented to the transmission of information relating to distance.

6. The server apparatus in a presence display system according to claim 4, wherein

means for storing information indicating whether a user gives consent for address information thereon to be transmitted to other users is provided for each user, and

the address information is not transmitted to the client apparatus of users that have not consented to the transmission of address information.

7. The server apparatus in a presence display system according to claim 1, wherein

the buddy list is constituted by a plurality of community sets in which other users whose state the user wishes to watch are registered in groups; and

information indicating the states of the other users registered in a community set designated by the user and information relating to the distances between the user and the other users are transmitted to the client apparatus.

8. The server apparatus in a presence display system according to claim 7, wherein

a relative presence setting table, which associates and
stores information indicating the state of the user and information indicating states transmitted to the other user in accordance with the community sets to which the other users that have registered the user in a buddy list belong, is provided for each user; and

when information indicating the states of each user is transmitted to other users that are watching the state of the user, information indicating states corresponding with the community sets of the other users is transmitted by referencing the relative presence setting table.

9. The server apparatus in a presence display system according to claim 1, further comprising:

means for creating a list of other users that are watching the state of the user and transmitting the list to the user in accordance with a request from the user.

10. A client apparatus in a presence display system comprising a server apparatus and a client apparatus for each user, constituted to allow the client apparatus to display the states of other users, comprising:

means for transmitting information indicating the state of the user and location information to the server apparatus;

means for receiving information indicating the states of other users and information relating to the distance between the user and the other users from the server apparatus; and

means for displaying the states of the other users in a display form that corresponds with the distance between the other users and the user on the basis of the information indicating the states of the other users and information relating to the distance between the user and the other users thus received.

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11. The client apparatus in a presence display system according to claim 10, wherein

the information relating to the distance between the user and the other users is the proximity that is determined by comparing the distance between the user and the other users with a predetermined threshold value; and

the displaying means displays an image corresponding with the information indicating the states of the other users received from the server apparatus with a size that corresponds with the proximity.

12. The client apparatus in a presence display system according to claim 10, wherein

the information relating to the distance between the user and the other users further includes address information, and

the displaying means is capable of displaying the addresses of the other users.